Eliot Rawson

Mr. *Hooper's*

SERMON

ON

Coloſſians iii. 4.

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1741

CHRIST the Life of true Believers, and their Appearance with him in Glory.

A

SERMON

On Coloſſians III. 4.

Preach'd at the Weſt Church in *Boſton*, October 4th. 1741.

Publiſhed at the earneſt Deſire of the Hearers.

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Paſtor of the ſaid Church.

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CHRIST the LIFE
OF
True Believers,
And their
Appearance with him in Glory.

COLOSSIANS III. 4.

When Chriſt who is our Life ſhall appear, then ſhall ye alſo appear with him in Glory.

MY *Brethren*, Our LORD JESUS CHRIST is a Pattern and Repreſentation of all his faithful Followers. 'Tis impoſſible for us to be his Diſciples and to partake of the Happineſs of the Goſpel, unleſs we be conformed to our LORD and MASTER, and are as it were ſo many Copies of this divine Original. Whilſt he lived in this World among Mankind, he was ſtrictly pious, holy, righteous and good; all his Thoughts, Wiſhes and Deſigns tended to Heaven from whence he came. At the ſame Time, he lived in a poor and low Condition, he ſuffered Pain and Affliction, and was at laſt put to a cruel and ignominious Death. But very ſoon he aroſe again from the

the Dead, aſcended to Heaven, and was exalted to the higheſt Degree of Glory and Happineſs at the right Hand of the Father.

Such is thy Life in this World, *ſincere Chriſtian*, and ſuch are thy Hopes with reſpect to a future State. Here it is thy great Buſineſs to ſhun every wicked and evil Inclination and Practice, to ſtudy a divine Temper and Diſpoſition of Mind, and to endeavour a perfect Obedience to the Commands of GOD, according to the Pattern and Example of thy bleſſed Saviour. Thou art always engaged in fighting with Fleſh and Blood, thou art ſurrounded with ſpiritual Enemies, often involved in Calamities and Afflictions, and at laſt thou ſhalt ſuffer Death, and thy Body ſhall be laid in the Grave. But when the Son of Man ſhall come in his Glory to judge the World, thy Body ſhall be raiſed from Corruption, and united to thy Soul again, and then thou ſhalt be Glorious as thy Saviour is Glorious. This is the great and important Truth taught us by the Apoſtle in the Words of our Text, *When CHRIST who is our Life ſhall appear, then ſhall ye alſo appear with him in Glory.*

In the Management of this Subject, we ſhall obſerve this Method,

I. We ſhall conſider this Phraſe, CHRIST *who is our Life.*

II. The Appearance of JESUS CHRIST: *When he who is our Life ſhall appear.*

III. The Glory in which he ſhall appear: *He ſhall appear in Glory.*

IV. The Appearance of all true Chriſtians *with him in Glory.*

Theſe are the principal Parts of what I propoſe to deliver upon this Subject. May GOD make our Diſcourſe promote his Glory, and your ſpiritual and eternal Happineſs. To begin with the

I. Thing

I. Thing propoſed, namely, To conſider this Phraſe, CHRIST *who is our Life.* That we may the better underſtand the Meaning of the Apoſtle, it will be neceſſary to reflect on the preceeding Verſes. In the ſecond Verſe of this Chapter, the Apoſtle exhorts us to *ſet our Affections on Things above, not on Things on the Earth*; that is, to be chiefly ſollicitous for the excellent and glorious Things that are in Heaven, and the Means which GOD hath appointed for the obtaining of them, and not to mind ſuch poor Matters, as inſignificant Rites and Obſervances, and ſenſual and worldly Enjoyments. But becauſe he knew that it is difficult for us to raiſe our Affections to Heaven, beſide the Argument he made uſe of in the firſt Verſe to this Purpoſe, taken from the Reſurrection of CHRIST, and his glorious Dominion in thoſe Places to which he calls us, he ſays in the third Verſe, *You are dead, and your Life is hid with* CHRIST *in GOD :* You are dead to all ſinful Thoughts, Deſires and Actions; you have formerly renounced every Thing contrary to the Laws of Religion and Virtue, and you are reſolved to mind the ſenſual Enjoyments of this World no more than if you were dead. *But though you be dead to Sin, you are alive to GOD*; you have devoted your Lives, all the Affections and Powers of your Souls, all the Abilities of your Bodies, and all your outward Advantages to the Cauſe of JESUS CHRIST and of his Goſpel. 'Tis true, this Life is in a great Meaſure hid from the World, *the trueſt and beſt Religion being moſt private*, ſo that thoughtleſs Men cannot perceive any Thing beautiful and excellent in you: On the contrary, they look upon you as the moſt contemptible People upon Earth, and your Lives as Folly and Extravagance. But *your Life is hid in GOD*; by this the Apoſtle means, that the Life of true Believers is *Sure* and *Certain.* It does not depend upon, nor is depoſited with Men, weak and changeable Creatures; but it is in the Keeping of GOD, who is infinite in Power, and with whom there is no Variableneſs nor Shadow of turning; therefore you have no Reaſon to doubt of enjoying and having it carried to Perfection. He ſays likewiſe, That it is *hid with* CHRIST;

CHRIST; that is, no Wonder it does not appear what good Men are now, nor what they shall be hereafter, for even JESUS CHRIST is hid from the World, his glorious Person being in the highest Heavens quite out of our Sight, and his Kingdom being supported and governed here below by the secret Influences of his Spirit. But our Life's being hid with CHRIST especially signifies, that JESUS CHRIST is the Fountain and Author of our Life, that he merited it by what he did and suffered, and that it is by his Holy Spirit that it is produced in us. Hence the Evangelist *John* says, Chap. 1. 4. *In him was Life, and that Life was the Light of Men.* And Acts 3.15. He is called *the Prince of Life.* Since then our Life is purchased by JESUS CHRIST, and deposited with GOD, we may be assured that *when* CHRIST *who is our Life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in Glory.*

And now from the preceeding Verses, as well as from our Text it self, it is plain, that by JESUS CHRIST his being our Life, we are to understand, that he is the Cause and Author of our spiritual and heavenly Life, that it depends upon him intirely, and that out of him we have not the least Degree, nor the least Spark of Life. As the Son of GOD at first created the World and all Things that are therein, and as he preserves and governs them all, according to these Words of the Apostle, Col. 1.16. *By him all Things were created, that are in Heaven, and that are on Earth, visible and invisible, whether they be Thrones or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers; All Things were created by him:* And Heb. 1. 6. *He upholds all Things by the Word of his Power;* So it is he that gives Being to the elect World, that sustains, nourishes and perfects them all. But more particularly, JESUS CHRIST is our Life,

First, As it is through him that we are justified. This, no doubt, is partly the Meaning of the Apostle in these Words; and this great Blessing is in other Places of Scripture called Life, as in Rom. 5.18. *By the Righteousness of One, the free Gift came upon all Men*

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to Justification of Life. As we are dead in Law, while we are under the Sentence of Condemnation; so being justified, being pardoned and accepted of GOD, we are restored to Life. By Nature we are under the Condemnation of the Law, and liable to the Wrath of GOD; but by Virtue of the Obedience of JESUS CHRIST, embraced by a lively Faith, we are freed from the Curse of the Law, and made righteous in the Sight of GOD. This I take to be the Meaning of that Passage, Phil. 3. 9. *That I may be found in* CHRIST, *not having mine own Righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of* CHRIST, *the Righteousness which is of GOD by Faith.*

Secondly, JESUS CHRIST *is our Life*, as it is through him that we are sanctified. This especially is the Meaning of the Apostle when he says, JESUS CHRIST *is our Life*; he purifies our Hearts and Manners from all Wickedness and Vice, and forms us into the divine Image, in Righteousness and true Holiness. He not only purchased this for us, but he works it in us; he reveals to us in the Gospel, the Nature of Religion and Virtue; he hath given us a perfect and moving Pattern of it in his own Person; he hath recommended it with the most powerful Arguments and Motives; he imprints it upon our Minds and Hearts by his Holy Spirit; he cherishes and causes it to grow up to Perfection. To this Purpose we may apply the Words of the Apostle, Gal. 2. 20. *I live, yet not I, but* JESUS CHRIST *liveth in me: and the Life which I now live in the Flesh, I live by the Faith of the Son of GOD, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* JESUS CHRIST begins, carries on, and accomplishes the Work of Sanctification in our Hearts and Lives, by Virtue of his Communion with us, as he is the Head and Root, which give Sap and Nourishment to the Members and Branches.

Thirdly, JESUS CHRIST *is our Life*, as he bestows eternal Happiness upon us. This is often called Life, and eternal Life. JESUS CHRIST merited this mighty Blessing for all those that believe in him; and having

received it as the Recompence of his Obedience he will certainly bestow it upon them. *My Sheep hear my Voice*, says our Saviour, John 10. 28. *and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand.* JESUS CHRIST then is our Life, as he justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies us. These are the principal Benefits he hath purchased, and which those that believe in him are said to be Partakers of; and they are set forth to us in the Name *of Life*, because they are the most *excellent and desirable Blessings.*

Before we conclude this Head, Let us reflect a little upon the Excellency of this Life we receive from JESUS CHRIST. It is the Perfection, the Happiness and Glory of human Nature. It constitutes us Objects of the Love of the greatest and the best of Beings, and intitles us to his peculiar Care. A Life of Sin makes us hated by a just and holy GOD, and liable to all the Curses of the Law. This proceeds from foolish, sensual, base and wicked Desires and Inclinations; the other from a divine Faith, a reasonable Love, and a just and lively Gratitude. The one consists in Error and Ignorance, in Profanity and Unrighteousness, in Hatred and Malice; the other in the Exercise of Reason and Understanding, of Devotion and Goodness, of Gratitude and Love. The one is attended with continual Pain and Uneasiness in this World, and with eternal Misery in the next; the other with Peace and Tranquillity of Soul here, and with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory hereafter. In a Word, by the one we degenerate into Brutes, and become fit Company for cursed Spirits only; by the other we become Partakers of the divine Nature, and fit for the blessed Society in Heaven. The one is Death rather than Life; accordingly, *wicked Men are said to be dead in Trespasses in Sins; and she that liveth in Pleasure is dead while she liveth*; the other only is worthy the Name of Life, and hence the Scripture very often absolutely calls it Life: *He that hath the Son hath Life; and he that hath not the Son hath not Life; and he that believeth in the Son hath passeth from Death*

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to Life. O glorious Life! One Day passed according to thy Precepts, is worth an Eternity in Sin.

Now, *My Brethren*, since JESUS CHRIST is our Life, since through him we are beloved of GOD, sanctified and made meet for Heaven, and entitled to it by Virtue of his Purchase, the Consequence of the Apostle is plain and strong, *That when he shall appear, we shall appear with him in Glory*; which brings me to the

II. General Head, which was to speak of the *Appearance of* JESUS CHRIST. *When he who is our Life shall appear.* In the Fulness of Time he appeared in Flesh, cloathed with human Nature, as the Apostle says, *GOD manifested in the Flesh.* He will appear again at the End of the World to judge all Mankind, and to render to every one according to his Deeds. He is now above the highest Heavens, far hid from mortal Eyes. 'Tis by Faith only that we know of his Existence. But one Day, he will descend from his Seat at the right Hand of GOD, and appear visible to all the World, the Son of GOD and the Author of our Salvation.

The Proof of this is evident from numberless Passages of Scripture; Matth. 16. 27. *The Son of Man shall come in the Glory of his Father, with his holy Angels, and then shall he reward every one according to his Work*: And Acts 1. 11. *This same* JESUS, said the Men in white, to the Disciples, as they were gazing up to Heaven, when our Saviour ascended, *This same* JESUS *who is taken from you to Heaven, shall come in like Manner as ye have seen him go to Heaven*: And 2 Thess. 1. 7, 8. *When the* LORD JESUS *shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels, in flaming Fire, taking Vengeance on all them that know not GOD, and obey not the Voice of his Son.* But we need not spend Time in quoting Texts to prove this important Truth. No Man that believes the Scriptures can deny it.

Indeeſt ſome ancient Hereticks from a miſtaken Notion of Things, and a falſe Explanation of certain Paſſages of Scripture, maintained that the Reſurrection was already paſt, and conſequently that JESUS CHRIST would not appear again at the End of the World, as we ſay he will. But their Opinion is ſo contrary to Scripture, that we need only to mention it, in order to ſhew its Abſurdity.

The Objection of the Infidels againſt this Doctrine is more dangerous than that of the ancient Hereticks. Theſe allowed of a future State of Rewards and Puniſhments, though they denied the Appearance of JESUS CHRIST: But the Infidels deny both. Our Souls, ſay they, are made of the ſame Matter with our Bodies, and with them they die and periſh for ever; therefore there is no Day of Judgment, no Appearance of JESUS CHRIST. As Fear firſt made the Gods of the Heathens; ſo it was Politicians and deſigning Men that invented a general Judgment, and Rewards and Puniſhments in another World. The Notions of a future State, and of the terrible Appearance of a crucified Man, are vain Chimeras and Scare-Crows, to beget and cheriſh a ſuperſtitious Reſpect, and a baſe Servitude among the People.

But beſide the Arguments that ſerve to prove the Truth of the ſacred Oracles, and conſequently the Truth of a Day of Judgment, there are ſome drawn immediately from the Principles of natural Light, which are ſufficient to ſtop the Mouths of Unbelievers, at leaſt to make them very modeſt in their Oppoſition to our Doctrine, and to conſider well before they venture much upon their own Scheme. If our Souls periſh with our Bodies, if there is no future State; why have Mankind in all Places and Ages of the World univerſally believed the contrary, and that they ſhall be happy or miſerable in another World according to their Deſerts? Can we imagine that an infinitely wiſe and good GOD would thus cheat and delude the Apprehenſions and Underſtandings of Mankind? If our Souls periſh with our Bodies, if there is no future State; how can you

D^r Tillotſon's Sermons Vol. III. Fol. A083
Sermon CLXXV. Fol. A100.

you vindicate the divine Perfections, his Wiſdom, Power and Goodneſs which are all concerned in this Point? Ought you not to think that the Wiſdom of GOD having made Man a reaſonable Soul, and capable of ſpiritual Refreſhments and the Joys of another World, is concerned to carry us into a future State, where all our reaſonable Faulties ſhall be exerciſed and our ſpiritual Taſte ſhall be ſatisfied? Ought you not to think that Things being promiſcuouſly adminiſtred in this Life, there muſt be another, wherein all Things ſhall appear regular and orderly, and the Juſtice of GOD ſhall be clearly manifeſted? Ought you not to think that the divine Goodneſs will continue the Life of Man longer than that of the Brutes ſo far beneath him in Perfection? Muſt we die like the Beaſts? If our Souls die with our Bodies, if there is no future State; whence is it that Mankind are ſo deſirous to purchaſe a laſting Fame to themſelves? Whence this inbred Propenſity, this natural Tendency to Immortality? Why do we ſhrink back into our ſelves and ſtartle at Annihilation? Why have we Peace and Quiet in our Minds, when we do a good Action, and a ſecret Hope that we ſhall one Day be rewarded for it? Why are we ſeized with Horror when we do a bad Action, and apprehenſive that we ſhall one Day be puniſhed for it? 'Tis GOD that cauſes theſe Thoughts, and Deſires, and Hopes and Fears in our Breaſts. 'Tis the ſupream Diſpoſer of all Things that points out another World, and perſwades Mankind of an eternal Duration beyond the Grave.

What is it that aſſures thee, thou Infidel, that there is no Day of Judgment, no future State? 'Tis not Reaſon; for Reaſon tells us, that there is in Man a Principle ſuperior to Matter, and which in all Probability will never die; that the Nature of GOD, the Nature of Man, the Nature of Virtue and Vice declare loud for another World wherein every one ſhall be happy or miſerable according as he hath behaved in this Life. Perhaps thou believeſt that there is no Day of Judgment, no future State, becauſe thou doubteſt of it. This is the Caſe of the Generality of Infidels. They change

change their Doubts and their Uncertainties into Articles of Faith. But a Faith founded upon Doubts and Uncertainties; is it a reasonable Faith? Thy Faith ought to be proportioned to the Principle from which it flows. And as this Principle is Doubt and Uncertainty, thou canst not build any Thing firm and stable upon it. Leave thy Doubts and thine Uncertainties; cease to flatter thy self with the false Idea of Liberty. Thou believest assuredly that there is no Day of Judgment, because thou doubtest of it: Is this reasonable? Where is the Man of the least Degree of Consideration, that will hazard a great Good upon a Principle like this? If there is no Day of Judgment, no future State, the good Man looses the Pleasure of being wicked, and of following his criminal, base, & brutish Passions, which afford but a poor Pleasure at best. But if there is a Day of Judgment, profane and vicious Man, what dost thou loose! We dare not describe thy Misery: We are not able to describe it; for the Torments of the Damned, as well as the Joys of the Blessed are now inexpressible. Thou looses an eternal Happiness, thou exposest thy self to the most cruel Torments, to intolerable Remorse, that will never end, that will never have the least Intermission.

How sweet, how transporting the Hope of a blessed Immortality, of a Perfection and Happiness without Bounds and without End, in the Society of Saints and Angels, and in the immediate Presence of GOD! Indeed this Hope obliges us to be strictly pious and good, to be holy in all Manner of Conversation, and to deny our selves the Enjoyment of vain, sensual and worldly Delights. But are the Pleasures of Sin, that are often attended with Pain and Disgrace, even here in this World, are they to be preferred to the infinite and eternal Happiness we hope for? Must we forego an everlasting and ravishing Joy, for a short and unsatisfying Felicity? Enter into thy self, profane Man, hearken to thy Reason, consider the Suggestions of Futurity that arise in thy Soul, even in Spite of all thy Endeavours to the contrary, and which prompt thee to escape eternal Misery and to save thy self. Having considered the

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Appearance of JESUS CHRIST, let us proceed to conſider the Manner of it, *he ſhall appear in Glory*, which was the

III. General Head we propoſed. It is impoſſible for us to expreſs or conceive the Glory of our LORD JESUS CHRIST at his Appearance: we have neither Words nor Compariſons to make it known by. He ſays himſelf, Matth. 16. 17. *He ſhall come in the Glory of his Father*; that is, in all the Majeſty, Power and Authority of GOD, in Compariſon with which, the greateſt Pomp and Magnificence of the World, is but as Nothing and Vanity. We ſhall mention a few general Things.

Firſt, JESUS CHRIST at his ſecond coming, will appear glorious in his Perſon. When he was here upon Earth, *he had no Beauty nor Comelineſs that Men ſhould deſire him*; *his Viſage was more marred than any Man, and his Form than the Sons of Men.* But he will appear at that Day in another Form, in a Body beautiful and glorious. What ſort of a Body, the glorified Body of our Saviour will be, may in ſome Meaſure be gathered from the Hiſtory of his Transfiguration, where *his Face is deſcribed to have ſhined like the Sun, and his Raiment to have become ſhining, exceeding white as Snow*, Matth. 17; and from the Deſcription of his Appearance to *John* the Divine, Rev. 1. 14. *His Head and his Hairs were white like Wool, as white as Snow, and his Eyes were as a Flame of Fire, and his Feet like unto fine Braſs, as if they burned in a Furnace.* *Moſes*'s converſing a few Days with GOD upon the Mount, made his Face to ſhine, ſo that the Children of Iſrael were not able to look upon it, for the Brightneſs and Glory of it. How glorious then muſt the Body of JESUS CHRIST be, when he ſhall deſcend from converſing with the Father, and from ſitting at his right Hand in the higheſt Heavens! It will outſhine the Sun in its greateſt Radiancy; all the heavenly Bodies ſhall receive new Light from the Glory of his Preſence. The Sun ſhall appear dark, and the Moon as Blood, when compared to his Light and Glory.

Secondly,

Secondly, The Glory of JESUS CHRIST will consist in the Number of his Attendants and Adorers. He will descend from Heaven sitting upon a Cloud of Glory with a vast and numberless Army of Angels, whom he will summon from all the Provinces of the Universe, to wait upon his Person. And whilst all that are alive upon the Earth are gazing at the Son of GOD and his heavenly Host, as they descend, one of the Angels will sound a dreadful Trumpet, which will roll the wide Circuit of the Creation, make the Earth to tremble and shake, and piercing into the deepest Tombs, will awake all the Dead, and call them to the Presence of the great Judge. Around our Saviour likewise will be the Saints of all Kindreds, and of all Nations come out of Tribulation, the Martyrs with Palms in their Hands, the Virgins with white Robes, the Church in pure Linnen with all her Children, casting down their Crowns before the Throne of the Lamb, and singing this Song, *To him that sits upon the Throne, to the Lamb that was slain, and redeemed us by his Blood, be the Honour and Glory, the Dominion and Power.* Wicked Men and Devils shall then likewise bow the Knee to the Son of GOD. Here they opposed his Interest, they contemned him, they affronted him; but then they shall see their Folly and fall down and adore him.

Thirdly, The Glory of JESUS CHRIST at his second Appearance will consist in his great and extensive Power. He will call all the World to appear before him, and to receive Sentence from his Mouth. None shall be able to resist his Power. The Judges of the Earth, the great Princes, the mighty Emperors, shall not be exempted any more than the poorest, the meanest, & weakest of Mankind. Tribes, Provinces, Armies, Nations, Worlds, shall be gathered together, and pour along towards the Judgment Seat of CHRIST, and *Adam* with all his Sons shall appear upon even Ground and upon equal Terms. He will lay open the Secrets of all Mens Hearts; his Condemnation of the Wicked will be so evident and just, that they themselves shall acknowledge it. Yes, unhappy Wretches,

you

you shall have the Confusion to condemn your selves, your Punishment shall be everlasting, your Torments unsupportable. Death the King of Terrors, and the most cruel of Enemies, shall be swallowed up in Victory at the Appearance of JESUS CHRIST. The Devils shall be spoiled of all their Power, and loaded with Chains of Darkness, *the Foundations of the Earth shall be shaken, the Heavens shall pass away with a great Noise, and the Elements shall melt with fervent Heat, for we look for a new Heaven and a new Earth.*

And, as the Power of JESUS CHRIST will be manifested in punishing wicked Men and Devils, so in saving the Wise and Good. You that renounce the Follies and Corruptions of the World, that make the Laws of JESUS CHRIST the Rule of your Conduct, that take Care to secure an Interest in his Favour by loving and obeying him, you have nothing to be afraid of from the glorious Power of the Son of Man. Towards you, he will exercise Goodness and Mercy, in delivering you from all the Remainders of Sin, and crowning you with Perfection and Happiness.

What Glory to the Son of GOD to descend from Heaven in the Glory of his Father, and with all the Angels his Father's Ministers! What a Glory to the great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls, to see his Followers who were scattered like Sheep, gathered together in the Regions of Immortality, and triumphing over their Enemies! What Glory to the Author and Teacher of Truth, to see Ignorance and Error destroyed, and Knowledge and Truth established! What a Glory to the Lover of Mankind, to see Sin and Misery banished from among them, and Righteousness and Happiness prevailing and flourishing for ever! *Then shall you behold the Word that was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, full of Grace and Truth; then shall you behold his Glory, the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father.* He was brought forth in a Stable and laid in a Manger instead of a Cradle; He shall appear in all the Majesty of Heaven: He lived in a mean and obscure Condition; he shall come again in the highest Degree of Power and

Grandeur: He had not where to lay his Head; He ſhall appear Poſſeſſor of the Univerſe, and the ſovereign LORD of Heaven and of Earth: he was deſpiſed and rejected of Men; He ſhall be attended on by Angels, and all the World ſhall bow the Knee to him: He was arraigned and condemned and crucified by earthly Powers; He ſhall ſummon all both ſmall and great, the Kings and great Men, and Judges of the Earth, to appear at his Bar, and to receive Sentence from his Mouth. The two different States of *this Perſon* are the Wonder of Mankind, and not of Mankind only, but likewiſe of the Angels above, that deſire to look into them. Let us in the

IV. Place, Conſider the Appearance of all true Chriſtians with their Saviour in Glory: *You ſhall appear with him in Glory.* Here in this World the true Chriſtian is often hid from the Obſervation of Mankind, his Graces are weak and imperfect; ſometimes he conceals himſelf under a Vail of Humility; at other Times he is covered with a Cloud of Affliction; ſo that it does not appear either what he is, or what he ſhall be; and Death ſeizes him as well as the wicked Man, and lays him low in the Duſt. But when JESUS CHRIST ſhall appear in Glory, the Body of the true Believer ſhall be raiſed again out of the Grave and united to his Soul, he ſhall be made perfect in Holineſs, openly acknowledged and acquitted before all the World, and rewarded with eternal Felicity and Glory in Heaven.

Firſt, At the Appearance of JESUS CHRIST our Bodies ſhall be raiſed out of the Grave glorious Bodies. What Horror will fill the Souls of wicked Men, when they ſhall ſee themſelves obliged to re-enter their Bodies, not to enjoy ſinful Pleaſures as formerly, but in order to appear before the Tribunal of GOD and to be judged and condemned by him! What muſt be their Shame at the Sight of thoſe Bodies, thoſe wretched Bodies, which *were* the Inſtruments of their Rebellion and Ingratitude, and which are about to be the Inſtruments of their eternal Miſery! On the other Hand, what will be joy of

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upright and virtuous Souls, to re-unite to themſelves Bodies, that perhaps carried the Marks of the LORD JESUS, and that will not only be cloathed with Glory to all Eternity, but even be aſſiſting to the Souls in their Operations!

The Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaking of the Reſurrection of the Body, ſays, 1 Cor. 15. 42, 43, 44; *It is ſown in Corruption, it is raiſed in Incorruption*; *It is ſown in Diſhonour, it is raiſed in Glory*; *It is ſown in Weakneſs, it is raiſed in Power*; *It is ſown a natural Body, it is raiſed a ſpiritual Body.* The ſame Bodies that died ſhall be raiſed again, but they ſhall be raiſed with very great Alterations. *It is ſown in Corruption, it ſhall be raiſed in Incorruption.* Our Bodies here in this World are made up of ſuch Particles, and they are framed after ſuch a Manner, that they are continually tending to Corruption and Diſſolution; but at the Appearance of JESUS CHRIST, they ſhall be freed from all Seeds of Mortality and Corruption, and be made incorruptible and immortal Subſtances, like the Heavens in which they ſhall dwell for ever; for ſo our Saviour ſays of thoſe that ſhall be accounted worthy to attain to this bleſſed Reſurrection, that they *cannot die any more. It is ſown in Diſhonour, it is raiſed in Glory*; our Bodies when they are buried, are baſe and vile, not to be endured above Ground for their ghaſtly Looks and nauſeous Putrefaction. At the Appearance of JESUS CHRIST, they ſhall be transformed into bright, beautiful and glorious Bodies; for ſo our Saviour aſſures us, that after the Reſurrection, *the Righteous ſhall ſhine as the Stars in the Firmament. It is ſown in Weakneſs, it ſhall be raiſed in Power*; our Bodies now are weak and feeble, liable to many Indiſpoſitions and Diſeaſes, capable of *doing* very little, but of *ſuffering* much. At the Reſurrection they ſhall be freed from all Weakneſs, Diſeaſes, and Infirmities, and be made ſtrong, active and vigorous, ſo as even to be helpful to the Soul in its ſpiritual Operations; *for GOD ſhall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes, and there ſhall be no more Death, neither Sorrow, nor crying, neither ſhall there be any more Pain*;

for the former Things are paſſed away. Rev. 21. 4. *It is ſown a natural Body, it is raiſed a ſpiritual Body*; our Bodies now muſt be repaired with ſuitable Nouriſhment, kept in Health with Labour and Exerciſe, and refreſhed with ſenſual Pleaſures. At the Appearance of JESUS CHRIST, they ſhall be made *ſpiritual Bodies*: not that they ſhall be converted into Spirits, for they will ſtill remain Bodies, but they ſhall be wrought into pure and fine Subſtances, ſo as no more to want to eat or drink, or to be refreſhed, or kept in Order, with groſs and carnal Enjoyments; for as our Saviour ſays, Luke 20. 35. *They neither marry, nor are given in Marriage, but they are like to the Angels in Heaven.* Such ſhall be the Glory of the Bodies of good Men at the Appearance of JESUS CHRIST: And if their Bodies ſhall be ſo glorious, what will be their Souls, that are capable of far greater Perfection? For

Secondly, As our Bodies, ſo ſhall our Souls appear with JESUS CHRIST in Glory. Wherein the Glory of our Souls will then conſiſt, and how great it will be, we cannot particularly deſcribe to you. Only in general, all our Sins ſhall be perfectly done away, *and we ſhall be cloathed with Robes waſhed and made white in the Blood of the Lamb. When the Marriage of the Lamb ſhall come, and his Wife ſhall be ready, ſhe ſhall be arrayed in fine Linnen, clean and white, which is the righteouſneſs of the Saints.* Then our Souls ſhall be freed from all Error, Ignorance and Prejudices, and endowed with full and perfect Knowledge. Here our Underſtandings are low and weak, ſuted to this State of Mortality; but at the Reſurrection they ſhall be highly elevated, and made capable of receiving the greateſt Manifeſtations of Truth, the ſublimeſt Diſcoveries of the divine Perfections, and of every Thing that may any way make us perfect, or happy. Here *we ſee through a Glaſs darkly; but then we ſhall ſee Face to Face.* Now we have ſome ſmall and imperfect Diſcoveries of Things, as at a great Diſtance; but at that Day we ſhall ſee Things diſtinctly in their full and true Dimenſions. *Now we know in part only; but then we ſhall know GOD*

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and other Beings, as they know us. No Clouds, no Darkneſs ſhall cover our Minds in that glorious State: We ſhall dwell in Circles of Light, in the Sunſhine of the Almighty's Preſence.

And as our Souls ſhall be perfect in Knowledge, ſo ſhall they be free from all Corruption and Diſorder, and endowed with pure and regular Deſires and Inclinations. Here, there are Spots and Blemiſhes in the beſt of Men; but then *they ſhall be holy as GOD is holy*; they ſhall have all the Wiſdom and Sanctity their exalted Natures are capable of. And how glorious will our Souls then appear, when they ſhall be filled with true and excellent Knowledge, and with the greateſt Degrees of Holineſs! *But Eye hath not ſeen, nor Ear heard; neither hath it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive, the Glory which GOD hath prepared for thoſe that love him.*

Thirdly, Our Souls and Bodies thus refined and exalted, ſhall be again united in one Perſon, and appear before the Judgment Seat of CHRIST. What this Judgment Seat will be, and where it will be placed, we know not certainly. Only it is probable it will be placed in the Air, and compoſed of a radiant Cloud, ſtreaming with Light and throwing forth a Flood of Glory. Hence it is called, *The Throne of his Glory*; and out of it are ſaid to proceed *Lightnings and Thunderings.* Before this *glorious Tribunal* ſhall appear all the Redeemed of the LORD, the Prophets, the Apoſtles, the Martyrs, the whole Church throughout all the World, and they ſhall all give an Account of themſelves to GOD. Then their Innocence ſhall be vindicated, the Scandal that was thrown upon them by the World ſhall be wiped off before Men and Angels, their ſecret Acts of Piety and Virtue ſhall be proclaimed, their Faith, and Repentance for their Sins declared, the divine Goodneſs and Mercy manifeſted, and the powerful Virtue of the Blood of JESUS CHRIST in the Sanctification of Believers made evident to the vaſt Aſſembly of Spirits. After they have been tried and acquitted,

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the Judge ſhall riſe out of his flaming Throne, and ſay to them *with an audible Voice and ſmiling Majeſty, Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom, prepared for you from the Foundation of the World*; To which no doubt their Voices will immediately reſound, *Hallelujah, Salvation and Glory to him that ſits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.* After which he will ſay to the Wicked on his left Hand, *Depart from me ye curſed into everlaſting Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* What fearful Shrieks and Lamentations will then be heard from that miſerable Company? LORD, who can dwell with devouring Fire? Who can inhabit everlaſting Burnings?

Fourthly, When the Sentence ſhall be pronounced, the Wicked ſhall be carried to the Place of eternal Torments; and the Judge will ariſe from his Throne, and aſcend to Heaven in Triumph and Glory, attended with all his Saints and Angels, who as they follow him through the Air, will with loud Hoſannas and triumphant Acclamations, celebrate the Praiſes of their Redeemer; *To him that redeemed them and waſhed them in his Blood, and made them Kings and Prieſts to GOD for ever and ever. Then the Ranſomed of the LORD ſhall return to Zion with Songs and everlaſting Joy upon their Heads. They ſhall ſtand before him, and ſerve him Day and Night in his Temple, and he that ſits upon the Throne ſhall dwell among them.*

As to the particular Time when JESUS CHRIST ſhall thus appear in Glory, we are altogether ignorant of it. This is one of thoſe Secrets, which GOD for wiſe Reaſons, hath reſerved in his own Power. *Of that Day and Hour knoweth no Man, no not the Angels in Heaven, neither the Son, but the Father*, Matth. 13. 32. The primitive Chriſtians from a Miſtake of ſome Paſſages in Scripture, and an impatient Deſire to be freed from their grievous Perſecutions, thought that the Appearance of the Son of Man was then at Hand. And ſome in the laſt Century were ſo raſh as to fix the particular Year of his Appearance. But the Event hath ſhewn

ſhewn their Folly. How could they pretend to foretell the particular Time of the Appearance of JESUS CHRIST, when JESUS CHRIST himſelf as to his human Nature, was ignorant of it? It is a certain Truth, that JESUS CHRIST ſhall appear in Glory, and that we ſhall appear with him; and this is ſufficient. Let us fix here, *my Brethren*, and be aſſured, *that if our Life is hid with* CHRIST *in GOD, when* CHRIST *who is our Life ſhall appear, we ſhall alſo appear with him in Glory.*

And now let us apply what hath been ſaid in a few Inferences. We might take Notice of a great many important Leſſons from this glorious Subject, but we ſhall mention only the Following.

APPLICATION.

Firſt, *Is* JESUS CHRIST *our Life?* What Love and Gratitude, Truſt and Confidence, Subjection and Obedience do we owe him? Is it through him that GOD is reconciled to us, and treats us with peculiar Love and Complacency? Is it he that ſanctifies and makes us Partakers of the divine Nature? And is he preparing Manſions of Bliſs for us in Heaven? Let us warm our Hearts with Love and Gratitude to our moſt merciful Redeemer, *who loved us and gave himſelf for us.* Let us call upon our Souls and all that is within us us to praiſe and magnify his Name, who delivered us from Sin and Miſery, and who makes us perfect and happy, who cauſes us to paſs our Lives comfortably in this World, and who will carry us to unſpeakable Felicity and Glory in another. We love and are grateful to Men, who ſave us from temporal Death, and beſtow upon us the Neceſſaries and Comforts of this preſent Life. How much more ought we to love and to be thankful to him, who ſaves our Souls from eternal Death, and freely beſtows upon us all ſpiritual and heavenly Bleſſings? Let us likewiſe truſt and confide in him for all the good Things we ſtand in need of; let us depend upon his Merits and Mediation for

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the Pardon of our Sins; let us pray to him for his Holy Spirit for the Sanctification of our Natures, and for Assistance, Direction and Comfort, in all Circumstances, Temptations and Difficulties. He is not only able, but he is also willing to save us. His Death for us is a Demonstration of this. And let us devote our selves and all our Advantages to his Glory, and to the Cause and Interest of Religion and Virtue. As we live by the Son of GOD, let us live for him; let us in Imitation of his Example, and following his Steps, make it our great Business and Delight, to manifest the Wisdom, Goodness and Mercy of GOD, and to promote the Welfare and Happiness of Men. Let us look unto JESUS, the Author and Finisher of our Faith, and follow him with Ardor and Eagerness in the Ways of Piety and Virtue.

Secondly, Is JESUS CHRIST to appear at the End of the World, and to call all Mankind to his Judgment Seat? *What manner of Persons ought we to be in all holy Conversation and Godliness, waiting for, and hastening to the coming of the LORD, when he shall descend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Arch-Angel, and the Trump of GOD*? Did we seriously believe this great Principle of Religion, what a mighty Influence would it have upon us? Like the Apostle, *we would labour, whether absent or present*, in all Conditions, in all Places, and at all Times *to be accepted of him; for we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of* CHRIST. We intreat you, *my Brethren*, to be firmly perswaded of this awful Truth. Even the Light of Nature teaches us, that a future State of Rewards and Punishments is highly probable; but Scripture demonstrates this Point; *Life and Immortality are clearly brought to Light by the Gospel. He hath appointed a Day, in which, he will judge the World in Righteousness by that Man whom he hath ordained.* Our blessed Saviour hath peremptorily declared this, and he hath been true to his Word hitherto, whether in his Promises, or in his Threatnings. He promised to send down the Holy Ghost after his Ascension; and that was

was fully accomplished. He threatned to destroy *Jerusalem*, and he did so. He hath told us, *that he will come in the Clouds of Heaven in flaming Fire, to punish the Wicked and to reward the Righteous.* How should this Thought awaken us, that there is such a Promise on Record, by one who never failed in his Word. Let this Consideration always fill your Minds. Think continually, you hear the Sound of the last Trumpet, *Arise ye Dead, and come to Judgment.* Let not the Pleasures, nor the Business of this World put far from you this important Consideration. Whether you think of it or not, this Day will come. And if it should come before you are prepared for it, your Business, your Pleasures, your Riches, your Honours will be of no Benefit to you. Think then of the Day of the LORD, and think of it in such a Manner as to prepare thy self for it. Leave all thy wicked Thoughts and Practices; court the Favour of him that is to be thy Judge, submit to his Scepter, pay a willing Obedience to his Laws. *Be wise therefore, O ye Kings, and be instructed, ye Judges of the Earth. Serve the* LORD *with Fear, and rejoice with Trembling. Kiss the Son, least he be angry, and ye perish from the Way, when his Wrath is kindled but a little.*

Thirdly, Shall all true Christians appear with JESUS CHRIST in Glory? This teaches us that while we are here in this World, we should endeavour to be like to our Saviour. Thus reasons the Apostle, 1 John 3. 2. *We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is; and every Man that hath this Hope in him, purifies himself even as he is pure;* that is, he sets the Example of JESUS CHRIST before him, and imitates him in all his imitable Perfections. As it was by a patient Continuance in well doing, and a perfect Submission to the divine Will, that JESUS CHRIST merited the Glory in which he will appear at the Day of Judgment, so your Bodies must be cleansed, and your Souls purified from all sensual, worldly, vain and wicked Inclinations, and you must be holy as GOD is holy, if you would partake of his Happiness and share of his Glory.

There is no Agreement between Light and Darkneſs, no Concord between GOD and Belial, no Fellowſhip between JESUS CHRIST and Sinners. 'Tis true, after all your Endeavours to become holy here upon Earth, you ſhall ſtill be far ſhort of that Holineſs which becomes the Appearance of JESUS CHRIST. But you muſt uſe your beſt Endeavours, and preſs towards the Mark for the Prize of the high Calling of GOD in JESUS CHRIST. Without Holineſs, no Man ſhall ſee the LORD. Not that wicked Men ſhall not likewiſe appear at the Day of Judgment, and do Homage to the Son of GOD. But they ſhall not appear in Glory: They ſhall appear cloathed in Shame and Confuſion, in dreadful Expectation of the terrible Sentence to be pronounced upon them. So that you muſt either give over all Thoughts of appearing with JESUS CHRIST in Glory, or you muſt prepare yourſelves for that Appearance by Faith and Love, by Purity and Holineſs. Chriſtian, thy Life is in Heaven; there is thy Happineſs and thy Glory. Do not debaſe thy ſelf by purſuing the mean and baſe Enjoyments of this World, and which are but Shadows of Felicity, whilſt thou neglecteſt the Body and the Subſtance, JESUS CHRIST. Imitate the Children of the World, in their Ambition. Thoſe among them that are nobly born, and much more thoſe that are Heirs to a Crown and Kingdom, will not engage in any low Employment, nor deſcend to a mean Action. As for thee, thou art of heavenly Extraction, a Brother to Angels, an Heir to an immortal Diadem and never failing Kingdom. Keep in Mind thine Honour and Dignity. Diſdain to mix with the Slaves of this Earth; ſcorn to ſtoop to their mean and groſs Delights; raiſe thy Thoughts to Heaven; meditate on the Glory in which thou ſhalt appear at the great Day, do nothing unworthy the Son of a King, of the King of Heaven.

Fourthly, Is JESUS CHRIST to appear to take Vengeance on all them that know not GOD, nor obey the Goſpel of his Son? This is Matter of great Terror to the wicked World. Now you put far away the Thoughts

Thoughts of the Appearance of JESUS CHRIST, you insolently break his Laws, you abuse his Favours, you trample under Foot the Son of GOD, you declare by your wicked Lives, *that you will not have him to reign over you*; you say, *that the LORD delayeth his coming*, you beat your fellow Servant. But profane and wicked Man, *the LORD is not slack concerning his Promise*. There is a Day coming, and perhaps is near at Hand, when thou shalt pay dear for thy Folly and Madness; when he whom thou now rejectest and despisest, and whose Laws thou castest behind thy back, shall *appear in the Glory of his Father, with all his holy Angels*, and punish thee according to thy Deserts. What Horror and Amazement will seize thee, when raised out of the Grave, thou shalt behold the Son of GOD whom thou hast made thine Enemy, coming in Power and Majesty? How wilt thou shrink back from the Light, and wish to hide thy self again in the Grave. Yonder comes He whose Laws I have broken, whose Love I have despised, whose Name I have blasphemed; he comes in terrible Wrath; wretched and forlorn, how shall I abide his Appearance, or whither shall I flee from his Presence? Mountains, Mountains, fall upon me, Hills cover me from his Sight. But the Hills and Mountains will melt away, and nothing shall be left but thy self for his fiery Indignation. Thou shalt be dragged to his Judgment Seat. How wilt thou endure the Face of thy Judge? Where wilt thou hide thy self from the Lightning of his Eyes? Hell with all its Torments is not to be compared to the Look of an angry GOD. *He that made [illegible] will have no Mercy upon thee, and he that formed thee, will show thee no Favour.*

Lastly, Shall we appear with JESUS CHRIST in Glory? This is Matter of great Comfort and Joy to the good Man under all the Afflictions of this Life. Faithful Christian, thou art while in this World, liable to great Afflictions and Calamities; thou art subject to Pain and Sickness, to Poverty and Want, to Shame and Disgrace, to Crosses and Disappointments, to Persecution and Death; thy

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thy Graces are weak, thy Temptations many and ſtrong, thy Saviour out of Sight, beyond the higheſt Heavens. Be of good Courage; yet a little while and all theſe Things ſhall come to an End, *and he that ſhall come, will come, and will not tarry.* Yet a little while and thy Body ſhall become like unto the glorious Body of the Son of GOD, and thy Soul ſhall be raiſed to the higheſt Degree of Perfection and Happineſs. Yet a little while and thou ſhalt be purified from all Sin and Corruption, and conſequently from all Miſery, and taken up into the Air to meet thy Saviour. Theſe light Afflictions ſhall work for thee a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory. Thy Saviour ſuffered much greater Afflictions than any thou art liable to, Sin only excepted. But the Glory he had before him, made him patiently endure the Croſs, and deſpiſe the Shame. And now he is ſet down at the right Hand of GOD. Be thou likewiſe ſtedfaſt, and thou ſhalt obtain the Crown of Life. Liſt up thy Head with Joy and Rejoicing, for thy Redemption draweth nigh. Thy Deliverance may come ſooner than thou thinkeſt of. The End of all Things, may be, is at Hand. Perhaps the Order is already given in Heaven for the general Judgment of the World; perhaps the Angels are already ſummoned to attend the Son of GOD; perhaps he is juſt about to appear in Glory; perhaps the Sound of the laſt Trumpet will this Moment fill our Ears. *Come, even ſo come,* LORD JESUS.

Now to him that ſitteth upon the Throne, and to the Lamb that was ſlain, and hath redeemed us from our Sins in his Blood, and will give us to appear with him to be Partakers of his Glory and Majeſty, the Dominion and Power for ever and ever. AMEN.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

Page 12. line 1. for Indeeſt *read* Indeed. P. 13. l. 7. for Faulties *read* Faculties. P. 18. l. laſt *read* the Joy. P. 19. l. 1. *read* re-unite themſelves to Bodies.